1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

764 177 Twenty years ago Routledge (194, p. 149) assisted in the interment of Angata, Pakomio's mother, who was put into a coffin and lowered into a grave in the Catholic cemetery. Curiously enough her prie-dieu was buried with her. Three English cheers added the only odd touch to the whole ceremony which was performed according to strictest Catholic custom. On the same day, a great feast of pigs was held, probably as a funeral banquet.

●765 From the English Company I obtained an old photograph showing a group of girls, dressed in white, singing for the dead. My informant, Victoria Rapahango, told me later that the picture was taken at a feast held six months after the death of one of her children. The long period between the death and the feast suggests a survival of some old custom.

769 787 775 Offerings of food were made for the dead, but we do not know whether this was a general custom for all dead or only for those who asked for food through the medium of dreams or in the form of ghosts. Our only source of information is the following passage in a letter of Father Zumbohm (230, vol. 6, p. 120):

> As to the souls of the bad men, they stay near the corpses enduring hunger and thirst in proportion to their wickedness. From there they sometimes go to beg food from their relatives and friends who must give it if they wish to be rid of the importunity of the dead. I had many opportunities to fight against this superstition, especially among women who had been converted. Very often, as a consequence of a nightmare, they were induced to put food on the grave of a relative they believed they had seen in a dream.

765 262 The mourning of relatives lasts from one to two years (87, p. 30) or even three years, according to Routledge (194, p. 171). For only sons the mourning might have continued for three or four years. Relatives—we do not know exactly who—had to keep food tapus and were not allowed to eat sweet potatoes (87, p. 30). When the mourning was over a great feast was celebrated and the "pappa was finished" (194, p. 171).

Comparison with other Polynesian Funeral Rites

171 764 The wooden platforms on which the corpses were exposed resemble the Mangarevan biers described and figured by Beechey (15, vol. 1, p. 170). They are also similar to the Marquesan biers resting on four posts (142, p. 57). The stone platforms behind some Easter Island ahus have their equivalents in the Marquesas. On Hivaoa the platform for the dead was made of stream boulders, well fitted together and encasing rough stones, rubble, and earth (104, p. 117).

SUICIDE

762 152 Suicide is reported to have been very frequent before Christianity was introduced. For the "slightest provocation" natives jumped from a cliff (190, p. 464). Very likely the psychological background for these suicides was the same as in other parts of Polynesia, especially Mangareva, where it seems to

I: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

415 berry fiber running over the edge and through the doubled up border. The short ends are sewn together with continuous horizontal stitches across a band of paper mulberry bast 8 mm. wide which completely encircles the container. Some containers have two compartments and a small container has only one.

Other Headdresses

291 I was told that formerly the women occasionally wore on their heads pieces of tapa cloth, stained with turmeric; these were called *pouo roiroi*.

[578 765] A special circlet (*vānavana*) was worn by men "in delivering a challenge to combat for revenge" (215, p. 535). Geiseler (87, p. 28) mentions that the revengeful mourner (*timo-ika*) covered his head with "a rough crown made of horsehair" (Mus. für Völkerkunde, Berlin, VI.4977) about which his catalog gives the following information: "Headdress of horsehair to look like a woman. Name: *ivive*. This wig is used when a man calls secretly on a woman in order not to be noticed. These objects are rare and these were the only specimens."

301 114 According to Tepano, men and women of the past often wore a sort of "comb" (*harihari*) in their hair. In this ornament, feathers were tied to small sticks with strips of paper mulberry, banana, or *hau* bark. Since no specimen of this kind of comb has been preserved and since none of the early or recent voyagers to Easter Island mention it, the truth of Tepano's statement may be doubted.

Women's Hats

291 Until the middle of the nineteenth century the women wore a special kind of hat (*hau pouo*), which is described by G. Forster (83, vol. 1, p. 566): [285] "The women wore a great wide cap, made of very neat mat-work; it was pointed forwards, formed a ridge along the top, and two large lobes behind on each side, which we found extremely cooling for the head." No specimen of these hats for women has been preserved. However, they have been figured by Cook (53, vol. 1, p. 290) and La Pérouse (130, pl. 11). Such hats are [532] carved on the heads of two images of women in Bishop Museum. These images are not very ancient, but were certainly made when these headdresses were still in use. The two lobes are larger on the back than on the front and are raised on both ends. The general form of the hat is elliptical and was worn lengthwise. From Cook's plate we may infer that these hats were made of small plaited strips sewn together like modern straw hats of European type.

Headdresses of Unusual Type

The Peabody Museum at Cambridge has two Easter Island headdresses which represent types that are neither mentioned in the literature nor remem-

2:Ferdon A-5 (1956) 1957
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

tablets are guarded by "devils" that will, in extreme cases, kill a man who stumbles upon such a cave and steals one of the tablets.

I had no time nor opportunity to delve into any beliefs that might exist regarding what happens to a person after death, but I suspect that here the church has made deep inroads, for the dead are now given the last rites of the church and then buried in a Catholic cemetery.

Immediately upon the death of an individual a certain amount of grief will be shown by the immediate kin, but this appears to be more the result of natural shock than of any culturally determined mourning pattern. Between the time of death and the holding of last rites, the body is kept on view in the victim's house, after which it is carried in its coffin to the church where the last rites are administered by the island's priest. As the body is carried from the church to the cemetery the cortege breaks into song. Some of these are of the slow, religious type, but many have an almost gay lilt. During and after the church services there is no overt expression of mourning on the part of the nearest kin, but as the casket is lowered into the ground a near-hysteria of grief breaks out among the closest relatives of the deceased and is explained by my informants on the basis that this is the final separation from a beloved one.

Since, as appears to be the case, the strongest impact of death comes with the physical parting of the dead from the living, one cannot help but wonder if this final show of extreme mourning is a direct result of the more abrupt practices of Christian religion rather than an Easter Island trait of long standing. It was not, after all, many years ago that burial exposure was practiced: by this method, at least the fleshy parts of the body disappear slowly over a length of time — it is only after the bones are left that final burial takes place in a tomb, usually a surface stone structure or a vault within the platform of an *ahu*. The change from a long drawn out physical relationship with the body to a sudden disappearance of a body in a pit, and the change from customary surface burial to sub-surface interment must have required considerable psychological adjustment. Today's overt manifestation of extreme grief as the body is lowered into the ground may, therefore, indicate that this adjustment to a new burial practice is not complete. On the other hand it may, perhaps, reflect a mourning pattern formerly used when the fleshless bones were given their final resting place.

During the evening of the day of burial the family of the deceased gives a large *umu* feast, often including music and dancing, for all visitors. At this time there are certain taboos with regard to the eating of the *umu* food by the immediate family. Thus, if a father dies neither his brothers and sisters, his children, nor his wife may partake of the food thus prepared. If a child has died neither

2:Ferdon A-5 (1956) 1957
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

of the parents nor the dead child's brothers and sisters may eat the food. Juan Atan explained this taboo by saying that the *umu* was the dead man's body and, should the immediate family eat it, something bad would happen to the entire extended family. He further explained that such an *umu* must be given by the family, otherwise something terrible would happen to them.

Viewing the *umu* as part of the dead man's body may represent an adoption from the church's taking of the sacrament, yet, considering the earlier practice of cannibalism on the island, such a view may hark back to pre-Christian times.

Originally such a death feast was held on the day of death, but its celebration so irked Father Estella that some years ago he condemned the practice and the natives agreed to hold it on the day after death. It now appears that this has been further modified so that it is held on the day of burial.

STABILITY AND CHANGE

The information reported here is admittedly incomplete. Be this as it may, the data, when compared with Métraux's account of ancient life cycle customs on Easter Island, shows a surprising number of carry-overs into modern times.[7] In the course of our work we have also gathered heretofore unreported information on Rapa-nui customs which seem to be indigenous and of some antiquity, notably the delicate situation of the first born son and his relationship with his father, and the position of authority of the parents-in-law of a married couple.

The foremost changes in the life-cycle segment of the social pattern are to be noted in that sector which would most interest the church. Since the Catholic church represents the earliest and most prolonged actively acculturating influence on the island, this is wholly expectable. In the realm of marriage, for example, the church has been included, rather than substituted, in that to the simple rite of marriage involving consent of both families, gift exchange, and marriage feast, the church ritual has been added. Interestingly enough, the church appears to have had little effect upon the indigenous concept of divorce which, until very recently, continued to be an unceremonious splitting up of a husband and wife relationship upon the slightest provocation. Here, however, the government has stepped in and, through attempted Naval enforcement of Chilean divorce laws, has introduced a change in the native idea of divorce to where it now involves the factors of blame and division of community property. For those who have not yet accepted this foreign concept, the old method of divorce has met with such troublesome difficul-

7 Alfred Métraux, *Ethnology of Easter Island* (Bulletin 160, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, pp. 101-119, Honolulu, 1940).

10: Cooke D-5 (1886) 1899
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

rial, printed or plain, for the women. Shoes are worn on only special occasions of ceremony, as, for example, during our visit. On their heads both sexes alike wear hats, the material of which is either bulrushes or long, slender leaves, torn into narrow strips, braided and then sewn together spirally. In making these they are far behind other islanders, the Tahitians more especially, attributable mainly, however, to the want of proper material rather than to the lack of intelligence.

Crimes of any sort, but especially the graver ones, are of great rarity, and murder, at the present day, unknown. Petty thieving is common, is considered a venial offense, and the injured party seeks redress by stealing in kind, if possible, but in any event, stealing from the thief. There are no punishments, so called. Mr. Salmon, who is guide, philosopher, and friend to these people, unites in his person (and being a giant in stature, he can well contain them) the duties of referee, arbiter, judge. They entertain the greatest respect for him; evince the utmost affection; look up to him as their master; go to him with all their troubles; refer to him all their disputes and grievances. His word is law, and his decisions final and undisputed.

There is a schoolhouse in which the people are taught from books translated into Rapa Nui language by the priests formerly here, and most of the natives can read and write. The functions of pedagogue are performed, after a fashion, by Pakomeo, the survivor of the Peruvian captives, who is also a preacher among them and conducts the services at the little church. The form of salutation on meeting is kohomai, "come to me." The reply, koe, which means "thou," you, yourself. In Tahiti, Society Islands, and Rarotonga it is, in-ora-na, "may you live in God." In the Samoan group, kalofa, "love to you" and tofa, "may you sleep."

With regard to the burial rites, it may be stated that no particular respect is shown persons of rank while living; still less do they receive any special funeral ceremonies when dead. All are treated alike in this regard, on the principle, presumably, that death levels all. The period of mourning extends over three days, and the rites are simple enough. Nowadays the service of the church is usually invoked. The body is carried out of the house and removed to some distance, either in the open plain, or to one of the image platforms, or into a cave, where it is exposed to sun and air (incidentally, it may be mentioned, also to predatory rats and cats in a semiwild state, which roam the island in large numbers, the former especially) until either dry, decomposed, or partially devoured. In the caves the remains are then shoved into an out-of-the-way corner and walled in with loose stones. At the platforms they may be laid away under a gigantic prostrate stone image, or placed in an excavation, either in the face or floor of the platform, or simply put in a convenient spot and covered up with stones. On the plains a circular conical cairn, truncated at top, 6 to 8 feet high, and built of loose bowlders, is frequently erected over the remains. Often the bones

15;Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2

on these transverse bars were placed the extremities of the bundle which wrapped the corpse. The description and sketch are based on a model framework, and a wrapped-up figure, one of the wooden images of the island, prepared by the natives to amplify their verbal description.[1] At times, instead of the four supports, two stones were used with a hole in each, into which a Y-shaped stick was placed (fig. 38). While the corpse remained on the ahu the district was marked off by the péra, or taboo, for the dead; no fishing was allowed near, and fires and cooking were forbidden within certain marks—the smoke, at any rate, must be hidden or smothered with grass. Watch was kept by four relatives, and anyone breaking the regulations was liable to be brained. The mourning might last one, two, or even three years, by which time the whole thing had, of course, fallen to pieces. The bones were either left on the ahu, or collected and put into vaults of oblong shape, which were kept for the family, or they might be buried elsewhere. The end of the mourning was celebrated by a great feast, after which ceremony, as one recorder cheerfully concluded, "Pappa was finished."

Looked at from the landward side, we may, therefore, conceive an ahu as a vast theatre stage, of which the floor runs gradually upwards from the footlights. The back of the stage, which is thus the highest part, is occupied by a great terrace, on which are set up in line the giant images, each one well separated from his neighbour, and all facing the spectator. Irrespective of where he stands he will ever see them towering above him, clear cut out against a turquoise sky. In front of them are the remains of the departed. Unseen, on the farther side of the terrace, is the sea. The stone giants, and the faithful dead over whom they watch, are never without music, as countless waves launch their strength against the pebbled shore, showering on the figures a cloud of mist and spray.

Reconstruction and Transformation.—Those which have been described are ideal image ahu, but not one now remains in its original condition. It is by no means unusual to find, even in the oldest parts now existing, that is in walls erected to carry statues, pieces of still older images built into the stonework; in one case a whole statue has been used as a slab for the sea-wall,

[1] The body was no doubt supported by staves, though they were dispensed with in the model, being unnecessary for the wooden figure.